

VZCZCXRO5967  
OO RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH  
DE RUEHGO #0006/01 0071030  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 071030Z JAN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6983  
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0795  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4341  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7886  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5447  
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 1304  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1235  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000006

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MLS, DRL, AND IO  
PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/06/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#)  
SUBJECT: BURMA: ARRESTS AND A HOSPITALIZATION

REF: 06 RANGOON 1207

RANGOON 00000006 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: P/E Chief Leslie Hayden for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Than Shwe regime continued arresting pro-democracy activists during the January 4 Independence Day weekend. Among those arrested were a NLD MP-elect, NLD Youth members, and three All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) members. Than Shwe's influential wife, Daw Kyaing Kyaing, has reportedly been hospitalized with a serious stroke. A source informed us the regime has created a special bureau in their passport division to create fake identities for the senior generals' family members to circumvent the visa ban. End summary.

¶2. (C) On January 2, the regime arrested NLD MP-elect Dr. Aung Moe Nyo, along with NLD members Nay Myo Kyaw, Sein Win, Than Tun and Maung Oo. All were arrested after holding meetings in their respective townships to celebrate Independence Day. The authorities also arrested Htay Myint, a home-owner who allowed one of the meetings to be held at his house.

¶3. (C) Others arrested over the past weekend included American Center students and All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) members Ko Ko Maung, Kyaw Zin Win, and Han Soe, along with NLD Youth members Htet Htet Aung, Kyaw Kyaw Lin, and Nay Zar Myo Win. After receiving information that Ko Ko Maung had been arrested, six other ABSDF members fled their hiding place, which was raided two hours later.

¶4. (C) The new arrests highlight Than Shwe's relentless determination to round up the young, active members of the pro-democracy opposition who have revitalized the movement over the past year. 88 Generation leader Toe Kyaw Hlaing told pol/econ chief today that he had been informed by his Special Branch Police contacts that he would be arrested soon because Than Shwe intends to lock up every activist before the constitution drafting committee completes its work and begins preparations for a national referendum on the constitution.

15. (C) This warning has not deterred Toe Kyaw Hlaing from continuing to work furiously to prepare a "vote no" campaign for the referendum. He has made several hundred copies of the 104 principles for the constitution the regime pushed through at the national convention without any debate or discussion. He has distributed the copies to activists throughout Burma, asking them to highlight the points they object to and submit suggestions for revisions. In a few weeks, he will collect all of the suggestions and work with his team to draft a compromise proposal to the regime. He plans to change as few principles as possible, focusing on key "make or break" provisions in order to make their proposal seem reasonable and palatable. By proceeding in this way, the pro-democracy activists hope the regime would face more pressure from the international community to accept their compromise proposal.

16. (C) Toe Kyaw Hlaing also works closely with Zarganar and the remnants of U Gambira's group of monks, the All Burma Monks Association (ABMA), who organized and participated in the September protests. He is assisting them to regroup and reconstitute the organization throughout the country to prepare for additional protests. Toe Kyaw Hlaing reported that the monk leader most wanted by the regime and still at large, U Pyin Ya Zaw Taw, is hiding in a "very safe place." Toe Kyaw Hlaing said the ABMA monks were dispersing throughout Burma to visit monasteries and gain more support for their movement. We have provided Toe Kyaw Hlaing with 100 copies of the publications "Democracy for All" and "Human Rights for All" which the monks will take with them to distribute on their travels.

17. (C) Toe Kyaw Hlaing informed us that a friend of his who works in the government's passport division told him the regime has established a special unit inside the division to create fake identities and passports for the senior generals'

RANGOON 00000006 002.2 OF 002

families so that they can travel and be educated in countries that have enacted visa bans against regime members. His friend told him that Than Shwe was particularly upset about the visa ban because his beloved grandson, Pho La Pyi, has just graduated from secondary school and Than Shwe wants him to have the best overseas education available.

18. (C) Two sources also separately informed us today that Than Shwe's influential wife, Daw Kyaing Kyaing, has been hospitalized in Rangoon due to a serious stroke. According to our contacts, she is in Pan Hlaing hospital, a private hospital owned by real estate tycoon Serge Pan. Than Shwe and his family are reportedly staying in Rangoon at their compound near Eight Mile Junction and several ministers have visited the hospital to pay their respects. Kyaing Kyaing, who is usually inseparable from her husband, was noticeably absent from the January 4 Independence Day celebrations in Nay Pyi Taw. A story is circulating that she had the stroke when she fell down the steps of a Rangoon pagoda after she prayed and meditated for several hours on top of a map of Burma, supposedly in an effort to prolong her life and power. Kyaing Kyaing is notoriously superstitious and regularly consults Burma's top astrologers. A month ago we received reports that she had circled Burma's most sacred pagoda, the Shwedagon, with a dog and a pig on instructions of astrologers.

19. (C) Comment: Rumors circulate widely about Kyaing Kyaing. So while she may have suffered a stroke, that it happened after she got up from meditating on a map of Burma strikes us as appealing to the Burmese sense of irony. We welcome signs the pro-democracy movement is coordinating with politically-active monks. Talent that had previously preferred to stay on the periphery of the movement has now been forced to take a leading role. Zarganar (reftel) and Toe Kyaw Hlaing are some of the most articulate, organized, intelligent, and energetic leaders we have seen so far. They stress cooperation among the various opposition groups and

play down differences to build unity; something the movement has needed for a long time. While the regime seems determined to shove forward their seven-step roadmap unaltered to entrench its power, the pro-democracy opposition seems equally determined to prevent them from doing so. This fight is not over. End comment.

VILLAROSA